

National Canners Association

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Information
Letter



For N. C. A.
Members

Membership Letter No. 55.

March 15, 1924.

Officers from Army Medical School Visit N.C.A. Laboratory.
Newest Vitamin is Stable to Heat.
Food Values Shown Graphically.
Coding of Great Importance to Canners.
Speech of Sir William Willcox Reprinted.
Writer Advocates Canned Tomatoes.
Wisconsin Pen Labeling Regulations.
Delineator Writer Says Canned Foods in Many Respects Equal Fresh.
"As Clean as a Sunbeam."

Officers from Army Medical School Visit N.C.A. Laboratory.

In order to acquaint themselves with the research work conducted for the commercial canners, and to get a better idea of the canning industry, the advanced class of the Army Medical School, of Washington, who are fitting themselves to become sanitary inspectors of large Army camps throughout the country, visited the Research Laboratory. We have been informed that the impression gained by these men during this visit was so favorable that the Commandant has definitely decided to make the visit to the N.C.A. Laboratory an annual event.

Commenting upon the initial visit, one of the officers wrote, in part, as follows:

"The Army relies to such a great extent upon canned food, especially in foreign stations, that all of its medical officers ought to have a good working knowledge of what food is safe and what is unsafe or doubtful. We were much impressed the other day to find that there was a laboratory, supported by the trade, but working on purely impartial lines in the general interest."

Of interest, and along somewhat the same line, was a talk which Mr. William Clendenin, of Chicago, made to the graduating class of the Medical Department at the University of Indiana. The occasion for the address was Canned Foods Week, and Mr. Clendenin spoke to the students for practically an hour. His talk was enthusiastically received.

Newest Vitamin is Stable to Heat.

Word comes from the Research Laboratory regarding the discovery of a new vitamin. The existence of vitamins A, B, C, and D is no longer doubted, and each one is necessary in our diet to secure adequate nutrition. It is believed by some investigators that B is in fact a mixture of two, each with a different function.

But the latest discovery is the existence of a new vitamin by Evans and Bishop, of Berkeley, California, and a little later, but independently, by Sure at the University of Arkansas. Unless this vitamin is included in the diet for rats, they are sterile, and no offspring result. It is rather widely distributed in foods, having been demonstrated in rolled oats, yellow corn, polished rice, velvet bean pod meal, wheat embryo, whole wheat but not patent white flour, Canadian field peas, egg yolk, meat and beef liver, but not in cod liver oil and orange juice. Drying lettuce at 212 degrees F. does not destroy this vitamin, nor does cooking 1½ hours under fifteen pounds pressure destroy it in the velvet bean, which is toxic to rats unless cooked.

It is proposed that this vitamin be called Vitamin E.

Food Values Shown Graphically.

The National Canners Association Research Laboratory calls our attention to the fact that the United States Department of Agriculture Farmers Bulletin No. 1383 contains some information which might be interesting to canners. The title of this bulletin is "Food Values and Body Needs Shown Graphically". The food values of some vegetables which are generally canned are given in this bulletin. However, most of the values given refer to the fresh vegetables which of course do not differ materially from the canned. One or two canned vegetables are given.

For instance, it is stated that one pound of canned green corn would furnish 13 per cent. of the energy that an average man needs daily and would supply 13 per cent. of the protein requirements, 22 per cent. of his calcium requirements, 39 per cent. of his phosphorus requirements, and 21 per cent. of his iron requirements.

Coding of Great Importance to Canners.

The National Canners Association has made special effort during recent years to emphasize the importance to canners of having some code system of marking their packs so that various lots of canned foods can be identified and separated out if necessary. This subject has been covered quite fully in Association Bulletin 89-A, entitled "What Every Canner Should Know", but at this season of the year, when canners are making preparation for the installment of their canning equipment, it seems worth while to bring to their attention again the reasons why coding is important.

Every canner should have some system that makes it possible for him to identify every can with the output of a certain line of canning machinery for a certain day or part of a day. In case of a small canner packing only one product at a time, a code that would identify each day's run would probably be sufficient, but in case of a canner who has a large and varied output, it is desirable to have code marks which will identify different lots put out during the same day, as well as those from each line. The important advantages of a coding system are:

- (1) In case of spoilage claims, it often enables the canner by means of his cannery records to trace the source of the trouble. Any questionable lot can be sorted out and so prevent unnecessary loss.
- (2) In case of seizure by State or Federal food authorities, it enables the canner to separate the shipment involved into lots, based on his code marks and this will often save a large portion of the shipment.
- (3) In case of over- or under- processing, which is usually confined to the output of a single or to part of a day's run, a code mark will

(4) Poor adjustment or faulty operation of closing machines may result in the output of a single line being defective and in that case it is well worth while for the canner to be able to separate these defective cans by means of code marks. Some cases have been reported where due to carelessness of warehouse employees different varieties or grades of unlabeled canned foods have become mixed and in absence of some coding system considerable loss has resulted to the canner.

(5) Some imperfection in the raw products or some error in the preparation of the brine or syrup may result in an abnormal appearance, odor, or taste in the finished product.

(6) Improper filling of cans may cause slack fill or overfilling in a certain portion of a canner's pack which he should be able to separate out.

Many canners have already adopted some sort of coding system. These systems vary in complexity according to the ideas of the canner and the size and variety of his output. Fruit and vegetable canners often mark their cans so as to designate the number of the line and date on which the product was put up. Some canners only use a single letter or figure while others use four or five, which indicate the plant where packed, product, grade, and date of packing.

Speech of Sir William Willcox Reprinted.

Members have been supplied by the National Canners Association with a reprint of the remarkable address delivered by Sir William Willcox, the noted British authority on toxicology, on illness alleged to have been caused by food, before the Provision and Canned Goods Trade Sections of the London Chamber of Commerce. This speech is one of the most remarkable treatises that has ever been contributed to the subject.

Copies of the address have also been supplied by the N.C.A. to the secretaries of the National Wholesale Grocers Association, the American Wholesale Grocers Association, the National Food Brokers Association, and the National Chain Store Grocers Association.

Writer Advocates Canned Tomatoes.

G.O. Luros, nutritional chemist, writing in the March number of the Garden Magazine, after setting forth the fact that tomatoes contain vitamins, writes, in part, as follows:

" * * * This is the cue for the canned tomato to enter the scene. However, unless you have a pressure cooker in which to can your tomatoes, your home canned tomatoes will have to give place to those commercially canned under pressure. This is because vitamin C, so essential in warding off scurvy, and which, along with vitamin A, is necessary for sound, healthy teeth, is very delicate and is practically destroyed under all processes of heating, unless this is done under pressure, in absence of air, and with a short period of heating. Vitamins A and B are not appreciably affected by ordinary cooking methods, with the exception of frying, provided the vegetable liquor is saved. Since we have found, by experiment, that tomatoes commercially canned, a process done under pressure and with a very short period of heating, are much richer in vitamins than those home canned without pressure, the housewife is foolish to waste her time in canning tomatoes, unless she has a pressure cooker.

Another advantage that the tomato holds is that it is eaten whole. Even the most inexperienced and careless housewife knows better than to

drain tomatoes of their liquor after they have been cooked, for she knows that is impossible. One of the worst habits in so many of our American homes is that of draining and parboiling our vegetables. Down the sink so many cooks pour that vitally important vegetable liquor, which contains from thirty-six to seventy per cent. of our vitamins as well as the highly important mineral salts. No wonder most of us are bothered with indigestion, poor teeth and constipation, as well as the more serious diabetes, when we so carelessly throw away nature's safeguards for our health."

Copies of the magazine containing this valuable and interesting article, if not available on the newsstands, may be obtained by addressing the Garden Magazine, Garden City, New York.

Wisconsin Pea Labeling Regulations.

In view of the fact that the Wisconsin pea labeling regulations go into full effect on June 1st, 1924, we desire to call the attention of our members to the fact that these regulations were published in full in our Bulletin No. 86-A and apply not only to peas packed and labeled in Wisconsin, but also to the labeling of peas shipped into that State from other States.

Delineator Writer Says Canned Foods in Many Respects Equal Fresh.

In the April issue of the Delineator, Winifred Moses writes, in part, as follows:

"Canned vegetables are not always adequately appreciated. When properly prepared, their nutritive value is in many respects equal to that of fresh vegetables. But, unfortunately, lack of care and improper methods of preparation often make them sadly lacking in flavor and unattractive in appearance. * * *

"Canned vegetables should be heated thoroughly in the liquid in which they were canned. In the case of vegetables of delicate flavor, it is wise to do this in a shallow, uncovered saucepan. If the liquid is allowed to evaporate completely, not only is the flavor retained, but none of the nutritive value is lost.

"The vegetables should be thoroughly drained before serving, unless one is fond of watery vegetables. In the latter case, the liquid may be retained and will serve either as a part of the sauce or as a diluent of the sauce. If, on the other hand, the vegetables are drained, the liquid, which contains a definite nutritive value, should never be thrown away, but should be used for soups and sauces."

"As Clean as a Sunbeam."

Thus writes C. Houston Goudiss, in an article captioned, "The Can in the Cupboard", which appears in the March number of the People's Home Journal.

Mr. Goudiss goes on to say:

"As much attention is given to cleanliness as to freshness! As soon as the fruits or vegetables come in, they are thoroughly washed, and if necessary, peeled quickly by machines. After this washing, which is far more thorough than in the average home kitchen, they are placed in cans, most fruits and some of the meats and fish by hand, but such things as peas and milk by machine.

" * * * Canned foods have come to be so universally regarded as essential to a well-stocked pantry, that it seems almost unnecessary to emphasize their economic and dietetic value. From the icebound explorer in Arctic waters, who eats his canned plum pudding on Christmas Day, to the sailor marooned on some desert island of the South Seas with his "tinned beef", all civilized people make use of, and depend upon them.

"They have meant most to the busy housewife, however, saving her time, money, and the tragedy of culinary failures; giving endless variety to her menu, and insuring her against the embarrassment of an empty larder when the unexpected guest arrives. They have won their popularity not only on their flavor, appearance, and uniform quality, but on the economy of their use. * * *

"Somewhere, a tall shaft should be lifted to the memory of Nicholas Appert, who banished the seasons, so far as the dinner table is concerned, and thus made possible so large a variety of canned foods unknown before, that he has a right to rank with those who are the prime benefactors of the human race." * *

"The can in the cupboard is the surest of all defenses against that poorly-balanced nutrition which even in the old days of unending hard work out-of-doors made winter a breeding-ground for all sorts of body disorders and brought us to the spring with a crying need for something to purify our blood; something to make up for the lack of vital elements suffered through compulsory use of an unvaried and wrongly balanced diet. * * *

Indeed, canned food has so revolutionized the food-support of life that no longer is climate or season a bar to right food balance. No season of the year now departs on a twelve-month vacation! And no part of the world now remains distant from any other part.

"A monument to Appert would be a fit tribute to one who magnified the food-meaning of daily meals as no one else ever has done."

x x x x